

**Ambassador Mull's Remarks on  
U.S.-Poland Security Cooperation  
Jagiellonian University  
December 16, 2014**

Good afternoon. Thank you Rector Mania for your introduction and for all that you have done to advance U.S.-Polish relations throughout your academic career. For 650 years Jagiellonian University has educated Poland's future leaders in the sciences, law, medicine, and humanities. It is a pleasure to be here today to speak with such a talented group of young people about United States-Poland security cooperation.

The year 2014 has been a dramatic year in this part of the world. Two major events – a great milestone for Poland and a major crisis in Ukraine – focused our attention on security issues. In June we celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of elections that ushered in a wave of democratic change throughout central Europe. At the same time, Russia has mounted the most serious challenge to our vision of a Europe “whole, free, and at peace” since the end of the Cold War. As if that were not enough, the transatlantic community faces the destructive forces of ISIL and Ebola. These events remind us that we can never take peace and prosperity for granted.

Poland in 2014 is more prosperous, free, and secure than at any other time in its history. Nevertheless, many Poles will likely remember 2014 as the year Russia destabilized eastern Europe through the flagrant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia's ongoing intervention in Ukraine constitutes a clear violation of international law and a threat to security along NATO's eastern flank. Over four thousand people have died in eastern Ukraine as a result of Russia's actions.

Yet Russia's aggressive actions have given new focus to strengthening NATO and strengthening the bond between Poland and the United States. The conflict has raised public awareness and appreciation of the most successful security alliance in history, and it also validated Poland's determination to enhance its defense capabilities.

The United States stands shoulder to shoulder with Poles as we confront Russia's aggression in Ukraine and take steps to strengthen NATO defense capabilities. The United States and Poland have taken our security relationship to a new level with a growing U.S. military presence in Poland. In 2012, we established the U.S. Aviation Detachment at Łask Air Base, which contributed to our larger joint effort to train more than 3,000 U.S. military personnel in Poland in 2013. This year, since the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, we've had a steady stream of F-16s, C-130s and hundreds of airmen, soldiers, paratroopers, and now armored vehicles and more troops; an enhanced presence that will continue at least through next year. And beyond next year, we are on track to open the U.S. missile defense base in Poland in 2018, with an additional 200-300 U.S. naval personnel.

Earlier this year, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Minister of Defense Tomasz Siemoniak decided to chart the future course of our special security relationship in the U.S.-Poland Solidarity and Partnership Program.

The Solidarity and Partnership Program is essentially a plan of activities that the United States and Poland can implement together to enhance Poland's defense capabilities, promote interoperability and strengthen the entire NATO Alliance. The Solidarity and Partnership Program stems from Poland's position as a trusted U.S. ally and a leader on security issues within the EU and NATO.

Some specific goals of the U.S.-Poland Solidarity and Partnership Program are the crafting of joint military training and exercise plans that include the continued rotational presence of U.S. military units in Poland; enhanced Special Forces cooperation; increasing Poland's capacity to host allied forces for training; and support for Poland's defense modernization program.

We have already made progress on a number of these goals. For example, we have planned the continued rotational presence of U.S. military units in Poland through at least the end of 2015; we are maximizing the potential of Poland's F-16s through training, exercises, and system upgrades; and our Special Forces have intensified cooperation through bilateral and multilateral training events like the one President Komorowski viewed at Fort Bragg in the United States in September.

Another achievement came last week with Poland's purchase of the American-made Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile, known as JASSM. This missile uses cutting-edge military technology and gives the Polish F-16 program a powerful deterrence capability. The U.S. government has only permitted Lockheed Martin to sell JASSM to three foreign partners, including Poland. The U.S.'s decision to permit the sale of this sensitive technology to Poland demonstrates our trust in Poland as an ally. Moreover, the speed with which the sale was finalized reflects the U.S.'s commitment to help Poland achieve its defense modernization goals.

The U.S. is also responsive to Poland's desire to build its capacity to host allied forces for joint training and exercises. Lt Gen Hodges, the Commander of U.S. Army troops in Europe, recently advocated the idea of pre-positioning a brigade's worth of U.S. Army heavy equipment and vehicles in countries along NATO's eastern flank. This would facilitate the consistent rotational deployment of U.S. troops to the region for training. This proposal is yet another indication of the U.S.'s resolve to meet the goals laid out in the U.S.-Poland Solidarity and Partnership Program.

Of course, the ultimate foundation of our security partnership is our solemn obligation to collective defense under NATO, Article 5. The U.S. commitment to Article 5 is ironclad; Poland will never stand alone.

Our military engagement has been matched by equally intense political engagement, including recent visits from President Obama, Vice President Biden, and five members of the President's cabinet, including Secretary of State Kerry, Secretary of

Defense Hagel and Commerce Secretary Pritzker. All of these visitors reaffirmed U.S. support for NATO's unshakeable Article 5 commitment to defend Poland against all threats; to remove trade and investment barriers to Poland's defense requirements;; and to modernize our information sharing arrangements to permit easier collaboration on important strategic military objectives.

At the NATO summit in Wales earlier this year, we reaffirmed our core commitment to defend each of our 28 allies against any threat, agreed to maintain a continuous presence of NATO troops in Poland and the Baltic states, and create a spearhead force of several thousand troops that can be deployed at a moment's notice. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg described the Readiness Action Plan adopted in Wales as "the biggest reinforcement of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War."

The Alliance is working to implement these plans fully and on time. It will take strong U.S. and Polish leadership within NATO to put the Wales plan into practice, but we will do it. Our collective security depends on it.

The United States deeply respects Poland's leadership within the EU on security issues. Polish troops served bravely in the Balkans, in Iraq, and in Afghanistan. As a member of NATO, Poland continues to set the standard for responsible NATO membership. We congratulate Poland in particular for its efforts to enhance its own and NATO's security through its \$45 billion defense modernization program. Poland understands that freedom cannot be taken for granted, and it does not come free. We applaud Poland also for its commitment to spend 2% of its GDP annually on defense. Poland is a model for other Allies in acting to support its own defense, and contribute to collective defense. Given Poland's leadership on defense issues, it is fitting that Warsaw will host the next NATO summit in 2016. As we move from the Wales Summit to the Warsaw Summit, we hope that more NATO allies adopt Poland's commitment to security.

Poles are understandably focused on Russia's threat to international order; globalized communication and modern technology has made the world a lot smaller, and brought threats closer to home for all of us. NATO must be prepared to deal with multiple threats on multiple fronts. As Secretary of State John Kerry explained recently, "In the 21st century, 'next door' is everywhere. There can be no limit to our vigilance either in territory or time. And that is a primary reason why the Middle East matters."

As Poland prepares to host NATO summit 2016, we look to Poland to continue to use its growing defense capabilities to protect NATO allies from all threats, including threats emanating from outside the transatlantic territory. We will work with Poland and other NATO Allies to fulfill the commitment to the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) and other agreements reached at the Wales Summit. We look forward to the 2016 NATO Summit here in Warsaw as a time to see full implementation of the RAP as a visible sign of our reinforced commitment to our mutual security.

At Wales, NATO Allies also recommitted to stabilizing Afghanistan and minimizing the threat of Al Qaeda and the Taliban by contributing forces to the Resolute Support Mission, which will provide the Afghan government a chance to create a better life for the Afghan people. NATO Allies and other coalition members are now committing to overcome renewed terror carried out by the ISIL extremists in Iraq and Syria.

A crucial point that I'd also like to make is that national security is not just the responsibility of the military; it is a multidimensional coordination between many partners from a wide spectrum of nations and specialties to address the many threats to our security. The global threats that we face, whether from outright military aggression, terrorism, "hybrid-war," cyber attacks, or pandemic diseases, require multi-dimensional responses. We need enhanced intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, effective border controls, and coordinated humanitarian and development assistance.

The conflict with Russia highlights the role of economics in national security. The United States and Poland have been strong voices for imposing coordinated Western sanctions against Russia. Such sanctions have already severely impacted the Russian economy. These sanctions have not forced the Kremlin to reverse its course in Ukraine, but they daily increase the long-term cost Russia will pay for its actions, in lost investment, economic development, and standards of living.

In addition, the conflict to the east has drawn attention to the potential security benefits of T-TIP, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Our transatlantic economy is vibrant, complex, interdependent, and generates approximately half of the world's gross domestic product. That is a strong foundation which T-TIP seeks to build upon. An economically energized transatlantic community is able to stand firm against Russian pressures designed to break up our solidarity. A European economy that prospers from free trade will have more resources for defense spending. The agreement can contribute to EU energy security. These considerations prompted European Council President Donald Tusk to tweet recently: "T-TIP is not just free trade; it is an expression of our geopolitical partnership."

It is clear that the world has changed dramatically over the last 25 years. From ISIL to Ebola to Russia, the international order that we painstakingly built after World War II is under threat. In response, the United States is strengthening its core alliances, defending the most vital international rules of behavior, and confronting the causes of violent extremism. Poland has emerged as a committed, capable, and valued partner in these efforts. We believe that through our collaboration, and working together to further the multidimensional approach to security I've described, the United States, Poland, and other NATO allies will successfully face our collective security challenges. And in the process we are determined that NATO itself will emerge stronger.

Thank you.